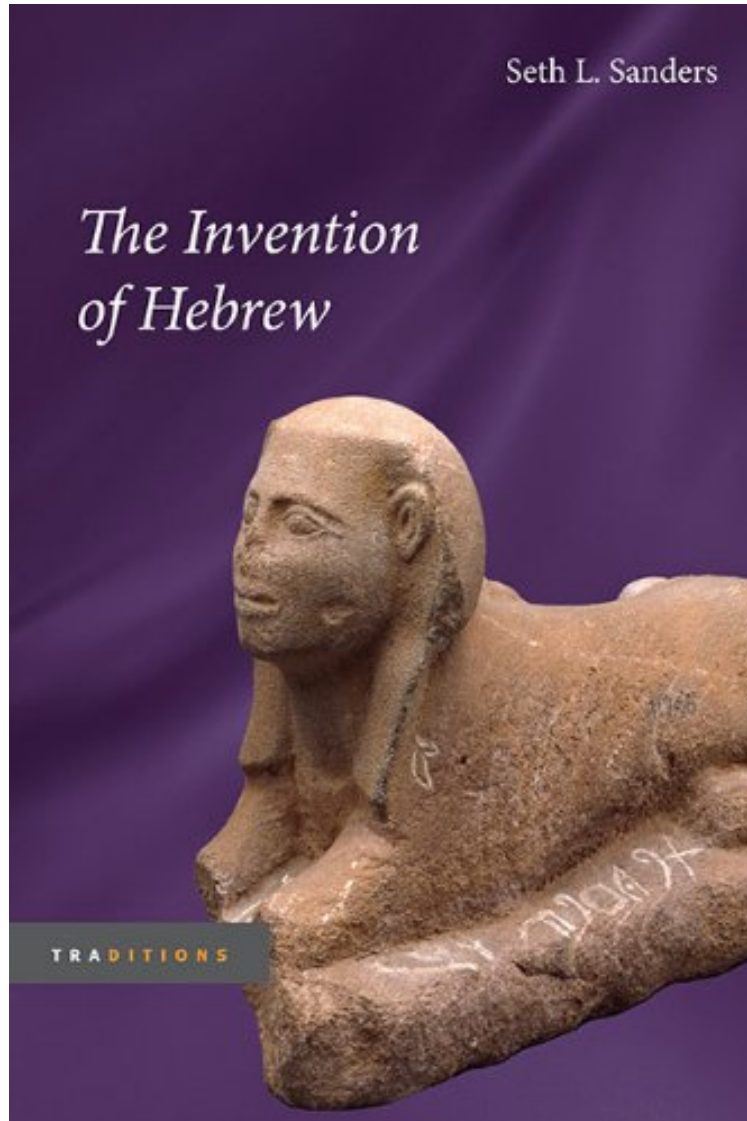


The Invention of Hebrew (Traditions)

Seth L. Sanders

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#1003482 in Books imusti 2011-06-28Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.00 x .80 x 6.00l, .95 #File Name: 0252078357280 pagesUniversity of Illinois Press | File size: 32.Mb

Seth L. Sanders : The Invention of Hebrew (Traditions) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Invention of Hebrew (Traditions):

17 of 18 people found the following review helpful. Why the bible speaks to usBy CustomerWhy has everyone from Haile Selassie to Martin Luther felt the bible was speaking to them, and why do we continue to find it powerful today? In this book, Seth Sanders combines anthropology and biblical studies to describe how Hebrew came to be used so widely, and to explain the unique status of the bible as a written document. According to Sanders, the bible was the

first document to combine local Hebrew traditions of history telling and prophecy with imported Assyrian practices of addressing conquered people -- as a result the bible put a people, rather than a king, at the center of history. Because it was one of the first books ever to speak directly to its readers, it makes anyone who reads it feels it is directed to them. This book is extremely clearly written for an academic book, and even has a certain flair to it. It is also extremely short -- 170 pages without the footnotes. Although at times it gets pretty technical, readers can easily skip the heavily epigraphic or theoretical bits and still keep up with the main argument because of the book's clarity and structure. While over-educated Jews will realize that this book is actually a gigantic drosh on the shema, it will appeal to many, many other audiences as well: biblical scholars could read it, as could anthropologists -- but the book is also perfectly approachable by anyone who studies the ancient near east or the bible seriously (not a little, but seriously) as a hobby. If it were available in softcover, or if you taught only certain chapters, it could be used in upper-level undergraduate courses in history, ancient near east, sociolinguistics, religion, political science, sociology -- the list goes on and on. In my opinion, this book is great. It combines so many fields that have been kept separate, compares ancient Israel with so many others cultures and societies. Reading Sanders's book, you feel as if your eyes have been opened and the fog has lifted on a lot of ancient history. If you study the bible or the ancient near east, the book is a must-read. And if you do not, now is your chance to start: Sanders's vision of the relation between politics and language is too good for anyone to pass up. 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Challenging and rewarding
By QWow! What an incredible book! Essential for anyone seriously interested in the Torah, Jewish Bible, and Old Testament, it's historical context. Sanders asks us to completely re-conceptualize the relationship between writing, reading, and speech in the Ancient Middle East; their functions and role. Because we have anachronistically assumed that the relationship then was the same as it is now, or rather, as it's been theorized by Romantics like Herder. Sanders' argument is way too complicated to summarize here, but he shows how the Torah implies, even creates a new form of more democratic community in its form of address: "Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God, the Lord is One." Radically new, yet also understandable only in terms of the writing conventions of the times. 0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars
By Isaac Vaisman Expertise and beauty

This text approaches the Bible in light of recent findings on the use of the Hebrew alphabet as a deliberate and meaningful choice. Sanders connects the Bible's distinctive linguistic form to a cultural desire to speak directly to people, summoning them to join a new community that the text itself helped call into being.